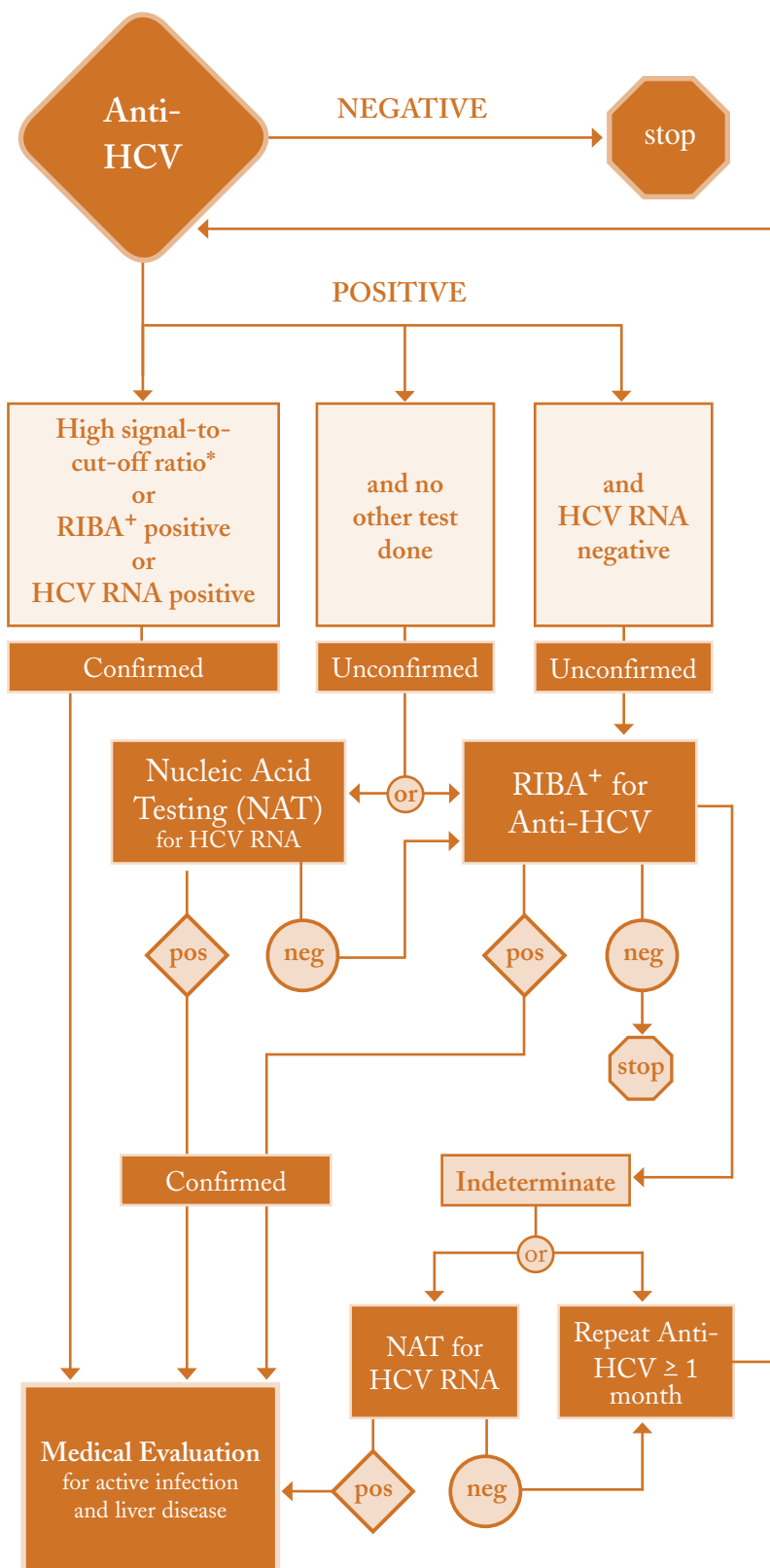


Hepatitis C (HCV) Infection

Testing for Diagnosis

Hepatitis C is reportable to the
Massachusetts Department of Public Health



*Samples with high s/co ratios usually (>95%) confirm positive, but supplemental serologic testing was not performed. Less than 5 of every 100 might represent false-positives; more specific testing should be requested, if indicated.

+Recombinant immunoblot assay



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Assessing Risk, Testing, and Talking to Your Patients About HCV

Questions to ask patients to assess their HCV risk status

- ☐ Did you receive a blood transfusion, blood products, or an organ transplant before July 1992?
- ☐ Have you ever (even once) injected drugs not prescribed for you?
- ☐ Have you worked in a profession or job where you were exposed to blood through a needle stick or sharps contact?
- ☐ Have you ever received kidney dialysis?
- ☐ Have you had unprotected sex with a person known to have hepatitis C?
- ☐ Have you had sex with multiple partners without using condoms?

Patients who answer “yes” to any of these questions may be at risk for HCV infection.

Whom to test for HCV infection

- ☐ Patients with a history of injection drug use, even once.
- ☐ Patients who received a blood transfusion or solid organ transplant before July 1992.
- ☐ Patients with hemophilia treated with clotting factors made prior to 1987.
- ☐ Patients with persistently abnormal ALT levels.
- ☐ Patients with any other known exposure to HCV.

What to tell at-risk patients who have tested negative for HCV

- ☐ Protect yourself from becoming infected with hepatitis C.
 - Never share any drug injection equipment. Enter a drug treatment program and/or consider using a needle exchange.
 - Use a latex condom every time you have sex if you are not in a long-term relationship with a single partner.
- ☐ Get vaccinated for hepatitis A and B.

What to tell patients who have tested positive for HCV

- ☐ See your health care provider on a routine basis.
- ☐ Get vaccinated for hepatitis A and B.
- ☐ Eliminate or reduce alcohol intake. If you need help, ask for it.
- ☐ Ask your provider before taking any medication (prescription or over-the-counter).
- ☐ Learn about treatment options.
- ☐ Avoid spreading hepatitis C to others.
 - Never share any drug injection equipment. Enter a drug treatment program and/or consider using a needle exchange.
 - Use a latex condom every time you have sex if you are not in a long-term relationship with a single partner.
 - Don't share razors, toothbrushes or other household items that may have blood on them.